

*Friday, March 21, 2008*

## ***NTSB Meets to Discuss 2007 Massachusetts Rail Accident***

On March 18, the National Transportation Safety Board determined that the probable cause of the collision involving a Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority train with a maintenance truck in Woburn, Massachusetts was the failure of the train dispatcher to maintain blocking that provided signal protection for the track segment occupied by the maintenance-of-way work crew, and the failure of the work crew to apply a shunting device that would have provided redundant signal protection for their track segment.

"This tragic accident occurred because several employees of the railroad failed to do a very important part of their job," said NTSB Chairman Mark V. Rosenker. "Simply stated, following required safety procedures would have saved lives in this accident."

On Tuesday, January 9, 2007, passenger train 322, operated by the Massachusetts Bay Commuter Railroad, struck a track maintenance vehicle. The train engineer, operating the southbound train, had a clear signal indication as he exited a curve at 62 mph. When he saw the track maintenance vehicle, the engineer initiated emergency braking. The train speed had decreased to 44 mph when the collision occurred. Two of the six maintenance employees were killed and two seriously injured.

Contributing to the accident was the railroad's failure to ensure that its maintenance-of-way work crew applied shunting devices as required.

During its investigation, the NTSB discovered that the train dispatcher removed the block on the track segment where the crew was working, thus clearing the signals for train 322 to enter into the track segment. The investigation also revealed that the track foreman failed to follow procedures and apply a shunting device to the track segment which would have held the wayside signals red regardless of the dispatcher's actions. Additionally, the track engineer, who was fatally injured, tested positive for marijuana.

As a result of this accident, the Safety Board made the following recommendations:

To the Federal Railroad Administration:

1. Advise railroads of the need to examine their train dispatching systems and procedures to ensure that appropriate safety redundancies are in place for establishing protection and preventing undesired removal of protection for roadway workers receiving track occupancy authority.
2. Require redundant signal protection, such as shunting, for maintenance-of-way crews who depend on the train dispatcher to provide signal protection.
3. Revise the definition of "covered employee" under 49 C.F.R. Part 219 for purposes of congressionally mandated alcohol and controlled substances testing programs to encompass all employees and agents performing safety sensitive functions, as described in 49 C.F.R. Sections 209.301 and 209.303.

To the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Ways Employees Division:

4. Promote the prevention of alcohol and drug abuse by assisting your members in addressing awareness, education and treatment options.

## ***NTSB Investigators Participate in Training***



The Office of Management recently presented a two-day Investigators-in-Charge (IIC) training program at the NTSB Training Center. The purpose of the program was to provide IICs with training in areas that have either been or could become problem areas and to further standardize policies, procedures, and practices during the on-scene investigation. IICs from all modes and the regional offices attended. NTSB panels and staff who spoke individually provided instruction. A feature of the program was the free and open discussions in which the IICs shared their experiences and lessons learned.

## Vice Chairman Sumwalt Addresses NBAA Leadership Conference

On February 28, Vice Chairman Robert Sumwalt addressed the National Business Aircraft Association (NBAA) 16th Annual Leadership Conference in San Antonio, TX. With record turnout of over 230 attendees from business aviation flight departments, the Vice Chairman drew heavily on his experience of managing a Fortune 500 flight department.

"I believe we can all agree that strong leadership practices are excellent layers of defense in preventing incidents and accidents," said Vice Chairman Sumwalt. "As aviation leaders, you not only have the ability to influence safety, but you have the obligation to do so, as well."

He cited servant leadership, integrity and vision as three leadership practices that he has found helpful throughout his career as a professional pilot, an aviation department manager and today as NTSB vice chairman. Admitting that it takes a strong commitment to practice these, the Vice Chairman said, "Once you have these, it will be like a North Star – one that your moral compass can always point to and lead you through tough decisions."

Vice Chairman Sumwalt also spoke about developing and maintaining safety culture in a business aviation flight department. Referring to the NTSB's 1997 Symposium on Corporate Culture in Transportation Safety, the vice chairman highlighted the Board's long-standing interest in safety culture. "Most aircraft accidents are rooted in organizational issues. Safety must start with leadership and it must permeate the entire organization."

## Project Management Training

Get ready to energize your work zone. Project Management training officially begins on March 24 at the Training Center. Your training staff has created a framework of project management training for all of NTSB beginning with the course Managing Projects. This 3-day introductory course will familiarize you with the fundamentals of project management and from there you may start your journey towards full certification as a project manager. One caution here, this is not for the faint of heart. Project management is serious business and for those of you who put in the effort, it's well worth the effort that you invest.

Your training officer and several of your fellow NTSB family have taken the full seven course cycle of project management courses and as a result they are better managers of time, money, and effort. We have chosen the ESI International Company to provide you with this valuable training. Should you complete all seven courses, you will receive a Masters Certificate from George Washington University as a testament to your commitment to better business practices.

So don't delay and sign up today. Soon you will be known as a Project Management Professional.

## Are You Up For The Challenge?



The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Office of Personnel Management and the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports have teamed up to challenge the federal workforce to get active. The "National President's Challenge" is a six-week physical activity challenge designed to get America up and moving. The National President's Challenge which encourages people to be physically active for 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week for 6 weeks will begin on March 20, 2008 and end on May 15, 2008.

Interested participants can register for free at [www.presidentschallenge.org](http://www.presidentschallenge.org) and will receive an activity log to track their daily activity. The Challenge is for both those who want to join alone or for those who want to join with others. The National President's Challenge lets you choose from almost 100 different activities, so participants are sure to find at least one they enjoy.

Everyone who completes the Challenge by being active for six weeks is a winner! Individuals and groups can download a free certificate of completion from [www.presidentschallenge.org](http://www.presidentschallenge.org).

For additional information, please visit [www.presidentschallenge.org](http://www.presidentschallenge.org). If you have any questions, please contact the NTSB's Benefits and Worklife Advisor, Lisa Kleiner, of the Human Resources Division, at [lisa.kleiner@ntsb.gov](mailto:lisa.kleiner@ntsb.gov).

## 2007 NTSB Annual Awards

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2007 NTSB ANNUAL AWARDS RECIPIENTS!

Presidential Rank Award - Robert MacIntosh (AS); Chairman's Award - James F. Wildey, II (RE)

Managing Director's Award - Cynthia G. Lepson (AD); Joseph Trippe Nall Memorial Award - Ruben Payan (RPH)

Dr. John K. Lauber Award - Scott J. Dunham (AS) and Carl R. Schultheisz (RE)

Distinguished Service Award for Administrative Support - Dianne Campbell (AD) and Tisha N. Kincy (AS)

Danny Raskin Memorial Award - Wanda E. Briggs (CIO); Employee Peer Award - Erik R. Grosf (SRA)

SPECIAL RECOGNITION:

Athena 106 Investigation Team, Big Dig Investigation Team, Comair Investigation Team, FOIA Program Improvement Team, Premium Pay Policy Team, Space Consolidation Team, Telework Pilot and Program